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I.

ON THE TREATMEMT OF SCROFULA.

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THE notion of *debility* has been very generally entertained by professional men as the cause of scrofula, and the source of the various sufferings to which scrofulous individuals are subject. Hence it has been too often the case, that when a scrofulous disease, or one supposed to be scrofulous, is met with, the patient is directed to take *tonic* medicines, and to eat animal food and drink fermented liquors; and in many persons the idea seems to prevail, that the more, both of tonic medicines and of these stimulating articles of food, that can be taken into the stomach, the better for the individual. I cannot, for my own part, imagine an opinion more entirely erroneous than this; and I conceive we should be much nearer the truth, if we said that scrofulous subjects should not take tonic medicines at all, nor the kind of diet alluded to. I say, in a comparison of these two statements, the latter would be nearer to the truth, and a more safe practice than the rule of stuffing the scrofulous patients with tonic and stimulating medicines, and allowing them to take into their stomachs as much animal food and fermented liquors as they can possibly swallow. The state of a scrofulous subject is certainly, in one point of view, that of debility. Scrofulous subjects are not capable of doing or bearing much: but, although individuals are not capable of doing or bearing much—and so far they may be said to be weak—you are to consider that the organs of scrofulous subjects are more easily excited; they will bear external agents less than other persons. How can you expect that the stronger kind of medicines, bark, &c., can be borne by the alimentary canals of such subjects? How can you expect that individuals of this excitability of system can bear large quantities of stimulating kinds of food? The notion, in my opinion, is altogether unreasonable. Unquestionably the regulation of the diet, and the selection of the articles that are to constitute the food, are circumstances of great consequence in the treatment of scrofulous individuals. The diet should be of a nutritious, but not of a stimulating or exciting kind. A mixed diet of animal and vegetable food has been found, by the experience of all ages and all countries, to be the best suited to the human organization. I see no reason whatever, therefore, for prohibiting scrofulous subjects from taking vegetable aliment; a moderate portion of the lighter kinds of animal food, taken once a day, and the mixture of it with well dressed vegetables, bread and milk, farinaceous articles, and ripe fruits,—these are the kinds of articles that should form the diet of scrofulous individuals. Certainly, in many instances, particularly those of the excitable kind of scrofulous subjects, animal food can hardly be borne every day. There are many such individuals to whom we should only allow meat every second day, and their diet on other days should consist of bread and milk, and other farinaceous articles, and well-dressed vegetables and fruits. The quantity of food, of course, must be carefully attended to. Children are not able to determine this point for themselves; indeed, grown-up persons do not judge with the greatest possible propriety on that point. The time of taking food must also be attended to. In younger children, perhaps food might be allowed four times a day, but, in those a little older, it is sufficient to allow food three times a day, nothing being taken in the intervals between the meals.

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* From Mr. Lawrence's Lectures at St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

In respect to *medical* treatment, we shall find, in general, that there is a disturbed state of the alimentary canal, and frequently some part of the canal is loaded with unhealthy secretions. Therefore the first object is to clear the intestines of such accumulation; to free the bowels, and to employ such means as will generally improve and assist them in the regular performance of their functions. Now because a person is said to be scrofulous, and scrofulous subjects are supposed to be weak, you are not to imagine that, in the state of disorder of the alimentary canal which you frequently find in such persons, very mild aperient medicines will be sufficient. It is often necessary to employ strong cathartic medicines, and these in considerable doses, in young subjects—not invariably, but frequently; and particularly so, if there be a foul tongue, and an offensive state of the breath, indicating an unhealthy condition of the alimentary canal, more especially if there should be combined with these circumstances a tumid and enlarged state of the abdomen. You must administer calomel in combination with rhubarb or jalap, or calomel with antimony, followed by the ordinary draught of senna and salts, or castor oil; and you must repeat these medicines till you get rid of the accumulation. You must first then clear away the contents of the bowels; and after you have done this, milder means will suffice to ensure their regular action;—a grain of calomel, or a few grains of hydr. c. creta, given twice a week, exhibiting at other times mild aperients suited to the case. The compound decoction of aloes is a good medicine in such cases, given in the middle of the day, or a little before dinner.

The object, after you have once cleared the alimentary canal, is simply to ensure the regular action of the bowels; not to purge them—you do not require that—but, in conjunction with the attention you pay to diet, the residue of the alimentary matters taken into the stomach should be regularly expelled from the bowels; and that does not require very active means.

Then, in certain circumstances, it may be expedient to give medicines of a tonic or strengthening kind; and if the tongue be clean, you may safely administer these. If you have cleared the alimentary canal, and got a clean state of the tongue, and the patient remains pallid and feeble; if the skin is cold, and there is a defective circulation in reference to the surface, you may administer tonic medicines—perhaps steel and mineral acids. The best of these tonics is infusion of Cascarilla with dilute nitric acid;—or sulphuric acid may be given, in the infusion of roses. Ammoniated tincture of iron, bark, columba and gentian, are tonics that are frequently given under such circumstances. Great confidence has been heretofore reposed in bark, in the treatment of scrofulous subjects; but I believe it possesses nothing particular in its powers: it is capable of doing nothing that may not be effected by other medicines. With these tonics, mild aperients may be associated. Rhubarb may be advantageously joined with carbonate of iron. If there be acidity, it may be advantageous to give alkalies, in conjunction with bitter tonics. It would seem that the principles of modern practice, even in ordinary cases, are not clearly established. Alkalies have enjoyed great reputation in the treatment of scrofula: the hydriodate of potash, and the hydrochlorate of lime, have been used; subsequently, carbonate;—all these have been regarded as specifics, and a combination of them with tonics has been employed. Other persons have wisely considered that a medium between the two extremes of the exhibition of acids and alkalies in scrofula, is the most desirable mode of proceeding. Having mentioned these opposite opinions generally, I may refer to my own experience; and probably the truth is, that neither the acids nor the alkalies are of great importance in such cases: the successful treatment may not depend upon the administration of either of these remedies.

An opinion has often prevailed, that mercury ought not to be given to patients affected with scrofula; that great danger is connected with it, of aggravating the affection and rendering it more obstinate. Certainly I think we cannot dispense with mercury, considered as a purgative, or as a means of restoring the secretions. We often find the most essential service in giving it in an active way, to clear the alimentary canal in the first instance; and, although in milder doses than I have mentioned, it is proper to continue it afterwards. But we may go farther, and state, that, in some forms of scrofulous disease, where the affection is active, and is proceeding to changes of structure in the parts, and to effects that would lead to serious evil—as in affections of the cornea of the eye, where a deposition is taking place there under scrofulous inflammation—it is often of advantage to carry the mercury so far as to affect the system of the individual, so that we can control the progress of the disease, bring it to an end, and prevent the destruction of the parts: and we do this, as far as I know, without danger to the individual in any other respect; so that I am inclined to think that the notion which has hitherto prevailed, and has been extensively spread, of the peculiarly unfavorable action of mercury on scrofulous individuals, is by no means well founded. When mercury is given in the way I have mentioned, we may employ calomel, in conjunction with James's powders—or hydrar. c. creta. Sometimes the sublimate has been recommended in such cases, given in solution, in the proportion of a grain to two ounces of tincture of bark or rhubarb, of which about a teaspoonful may be taken for a dose.

The state of the skin is a point of particular consequence in the management of scrofulous subjects. We very commonly find the skin dry, harsh and pallid; a state of the surface in which there is defect in the capillary circulation; where the quantity of blood that should be sent to the surface of the body does not reach it, and where, consequently, the secretions of the skin are deficient. When we consider the great extent of the skin, the importance of its secretions, the quantity of matter that is naturally separated from the body by the cutaneous transpiration, we cannot be surprised that the condition of this part should have a great influence on the health; and, in scrofulous subjects, we find the skin in a state far from healthy. Under such circumstances, warm bathing is very advantageous; where this cannot be accomplished, washing the skin once a day with warm water, and rubbing it well, may be resorted to. The individual in whom such a state of skin exists, should be warmly clothed; more especially in the colder part of the year. It is a very mistaken notion to suppose that the kind of weakness which exists in scrofulous subjects can be remedied by *hardening* them, as it is termed,—that is, by allowing them to be exposed to cold and vicissitudes of temperature. The animal powers are comparatively defective, and therefore you suspect, very naturally, that they are not capable of that exertion which is necessary to meet these exigences and these vicissitudes; neither should they be exposed to them. It is always desirable that scrofulous subjects should have exercise; and therefore I by no means wish that they should be kept at home, or prevented from going out because it is cold; but that they should be allowed to go out and to take exercise, having care that they are so clothed as not to suffer from the cold. It is found, by experiments on animals, that the power of generating heat is less in young subjects than in adults: and it is less in proportion to the early age of the individual. In respect to the great advantages under which the individual is placed, so far as it regards temperature, and also so far as regards a proper supply of healthy nutriment, properly adapted to the purposes of the economy,—in these two respects we see, I think, the reason why children, during the period of suckling, do not suffer from scrofula at that time; at all events, children so circumstanced are generally warmly clothed;—the infant is, in a great measure, about the person of the nurse, and has the benefit of the temperature produced by her; so that they do not suffer from cold, and there is a supply of healthy nourishment produced by the hand of nature for them. Thus the two great causes of exciting scrofula under other circumstances—exposure to cold and insufficiency, or an unwholesome kind of nutriment—are prevented, in the case of an infant, during suckling.

I have mentioned that exercise should be regularly taken; and, in fact, if you leave children to themselves, they will naturally engage in a variety of active pursuits, by which their muscular system is sufficiently exercised: and, I think, if anything like a tendency to a disease of this kind is manifested, parents ought to consider the advantages of education as a secondary thing to that of establishing the health of their children; for nothing like attention to book-learning, or studies, ought to interfere with those rules that are considered necessary to restore and secure health under such circumstances.

These are the general points of management that are applicable to the treatment of strumous individuals. You observe all these are what may be called general rules, whether in management or medicine; in fact, as the great cause of scrofulous disease is found in a certain state of constitution, the means that are designed to obviate the disease must be applied to the cause, and must be of a *general* nature. However, we frequently have occasion to apply *local* measures in conjunction with them, though perhaps these may be considered as secondary in point of importance. In the case of simple chronic swelling, without any very active inflammation, it may be sufficient to trust to the general means of management that I have mentioned; and the parts may be kept warmly covered with soap plaster. When more active inflammation exists, if there is a great degree of redness, and heat, and pain, you must apply mild antiphlogistic means, according to the degree of inflammatory symptoms. You would apply a few leeches to the part; you might apply an evaporating wash, or a poultice of bread and milk, or linseed afterwards. When suppuration takes place, it is necessary to open the collection very quickly. You do not make an absolute rule of this; but, under many circumstances, there is a want of disposition to come to the surface: the collection will extend in circumference, and the difficulties which frequently result from scrofulous abscess will be increased. If you leave it to itself, the skin often becomes excessively thin; and when the swelling forms matter, considerable part of the skin must ulcerate, for it is so far deprived of life that it cannot remain attached to the parts belonging to it. You obviate this by opening the collection pretty early. The languid and unhealthy kind of ulceration which frequently follows after the abscess is broke, or which takes place spontaneously in the skin, very often requires the use of local stimuli or astringents, but it is not by any means universal. Under many circumstances, scrofulous ulcers do well by simple local means, such as linseed, or bread poultice, or a simple dressing of soft ointment, or other simple dressings. But when the surface of the skin is pale or livid, when these signs of deficiency in the restorative process are observed, you may dress the surface of the sore with nitrate of silver, or sulphate of zinc, or red precipitate ointment; that is, you must apply local stimulants suited to the exigences of the case. In chronic scrofulous inflammation, you often find it necessary to have recourse, in the first place, to mild antiphlogistic treatment, and afterwards counter-irritation; to blister, to stimulate, or use the measures proposed by rubbing tartar emetic ointment on the skin.

The mention of this mode leads

me to observe, that you see, in many instances of scrofula, the means which nature employs in the cure of such diseases. You often find that the scrofulous disease in one part ceases, and there is an appearance of the disease in another neighboring part. For example, a patient has strumous ophthalmia, and may be suffering much from it. An eruption, with discharge, will take place from the skin behind the ears, and then the eye will get well, and so the disease shifts from one part to another. Now, following this hint, you will find that the use of tartar emetic ointment rubbed on the skin may be advantageously employed; it produces a disease which will supersede that which has already existed, and it is a powerful means of relieving strumous ophthalmia, when it is applied behind the ears, or at the back of the neck: and I have heard of individuals who have employed it still more extensively. For example: for affections of the glands of the neck, they produce an eruption by rubbing tartar emetic on the arms; and, in case of its appearing lower on the body, they use it so as to produce a copious eruption on the thighs. This is an imitation of the process which nature herself employs in the cure of these affections.

II.

NITRATE OF POTASH IN SCURVY.

A SEVERE scorbutic affection broke out among the crew of a British transport ship, on her passage from Ireland to New South Wales, which threatened to destroy all on board. By the use of a solution of the nitrate of potash, in vinegar, or in a mixture of vinegar and lemon juice, its progress was checked, and the crew safely landed at their place of destination. The disease assumed various forms, and gave a degree of uncommon severity and obstinacy to the dysenteries and other complaints which appeared among the convicts—the number of whom was no less than 216, and all in a state of debility from hard fare before, and hard weather after, their embarkation. The report of the naval Surgeon gives the following history of the mode of using this simple medicine, the effects of which are represented to have been almost miraculous:—

But I might add that the most distressing symptoms which my patients complained of, in the early stage—namely, a sense of "oppression and sinking at the pit of the stomach"—were almost invariably removed, or totally relieved, by a few doses of the medicine. The prisoners themselves were so sensible of its good effects, that I had, for the first time, an opportunity of seeing men crave for medicine, the taste of which was certainly not pleasant; and their complexions were so much improved under its use—changing from a sallow, bloated hue, sometimes approaching to livid, to a clear healthy color—that it became matter of surprise to every one.

The medicine was prepared, and exhibited in the following manner:—Eight ounces of nitre were dissolved in so much vinegar as would make the solution amount to sixty-four ounces. Sometimes equal parts of vinegar and lime-juice were used. A little sugar was generally added to render it more palatable; and about four drops of ol. menth. piperitæ, diffused in a small portion of alcohol, was added to the whole, which rendered it more grateful to the stomach.

One ounce of this solution was the dose, and was seldom exceeded. From three to eight doses, according to the stage of the disease and the severity of the symptoms, were given at equal intervals during the day, from six o'clock in the morning till eight at night. In general, when the disease was taken early, two or three doses a day, for a week or ten days, were sufficient; but it appeared to me to be always better to commence with three or four doses, and increase the number gradually—daily, if necessary. In the advanced stages a much larger quantity may be taken, and is in fact required, than at the commencement of the disease; but, although I have often given the solution to the extent of eight ounces daily, and on one or two occasions exceeded this quantity considerably, and have at the same time watched my patients very closely, I never observed any irritation of the stomach or bowels, or any other inconvenience which could be fairly attributed to it. It is nevertheless advisable to dilute each dose with two or three ounces of water, when exhibited. While the constitution is thus being corrected and improved, particular symptoms will require the usual attention.

It is perhaps proper to notice that, about two years ago, I had occasion to give a solution of nitre in water a fair trial in several bad cases of scurvy, where neither vinegar nor lime-juice could be obtained; and, except that sometimes it did not appear to me to sit so easy on the stomach, with the same good effects on the disease.

III.

POPULAR SUMMARY OF VACCINATION.

By J. Marshall, Esq. 8vo. pp. 85. 1830.

This work has not reached this country, though a notice of it has, in the Medico-Chirurgical Review, from which we copy the following extraordinary case:—

In August, 1829, a healthy sucking babe, six months old, was vaccinated, in fellowship with twelve other infants, from the vesicles of an eighth-day case: the latter number went through the relative degrees of vaccination in the usual style. On the eighth day, several of these were confronted with the phenomena of this unusual case. The mother stated that her child had an eruption, which came out the day before (seventh), and wished it to be examined. The patient had, from the effect of the operation, four vesicles on the right arm and three on the left, correct as to form and size, with a pearly hue, but the areola forwarder than is usual on the eighth day, exceeding an inch in diameter. The eruption appeared on the face, extending over the body, but thinly scattered, amounting to about fifty, mostly two or three inches asunder. Each eruptive pock bore a beautiful miniature resemblance, about half the size, to those on the arm effected by the operation; the diameter of each eruptive vesicle exceeded the eighth of an inch, was circular, indented in the centre, and elevated at the edges, the surface of a polished pearly lustre, and surrounded by a rose-colored pearly lustre, half an inch in diameter.

This eruption may be deemed to be *sui generis*, differing from all others, and by no means partaking of the varioliform type. The case is so extremely rare that no one, it is surmised, has met with its fellow : it yields an exception to a general rule ; is a departure from the usual law of the disease and the animal economy; in nosology, from its rarity, it is incapable of classification, and can only be viewed as a capricious play of nature.

Mr. Marshall strongly recommends at least three punctures in each arm, and informs us that, "in almost every part of the united Empire, either a solitary vesicle, or only one in each arm, is formed." If this be the case, it is high time that medical practitioners should alter their practice. It may be owing to a want of lymph, that they confine themselves to such paucity of vesicles ! Re-vaccination is advised by Mr. Marshall. The extensive field which our author has had, as a public vaccinator, must have afforded him some novel materials, if such existed ; but we imagine the subject of vaccination is now completely exhausted, and that, if a Mosely were to rise from the grave, he would not be able to invest it with a single new attribute.

IV.

MODE IN WHICH THE POISON OF LEAD IS CONVEYED INTO THE SYSTEM.

It was stated by Dr. Thompson, at a late meeting of the Westminster Medical Society, that, from a number of experiments and observations, he had been satisfied that none of the salts of lead are poisonous but the *carbonate ;* and that where mischief had resulted from the use of the acetate or subacetate, the cause was the conversion of these into the carbonate.—When exposed to the action of the air or of pure water, lead, as every one knows, becomes tarnished. This tarnish is not an oxydation, but the formation of a thin crust of the carbonate which is formed on the lead ; and if this crust be scraped off and mixed with acetic acid, brisk fermentation accompanies its solution.

In view of these facts, we should caution the public against the use of lead pipes to conduct soft water which is to be subsequently conveyed into the human stomach ; and much care should be used in avoiding, for culinary purposes, rain or snow water which has passed over roofs or spouts lined with lead. Rain, snow, or spring water are mentioned; for it has been ascertained by Dr. Christison, that the presence of neutral salts and other foreign ingredients held in solution by water, impairs its power of thus acting on the lead ; and this is the reason why soda water, passing through pipes of this material, is so seldom poisonous. This caution is particularly necessary for persons who reside at a distance from the seaboard, and particularly in sandy regions, where most of the water used in cooking &c. is comparatively destitute of these ingredients. As for Boston, there can be little apprehension on this score ; we can truly say as Dr. Johnson, when treating of the same subject, says of London, "if purity of water be a dangerous property, this metropolis is as secure as if the inhabitants drank nothing but nectar."

BOSTON, TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 1830.

M. GIROU'S NEW THEORY OF GENERATION.

Pursuing his experiments among a different class of animals, M. Girou made similar arrangements in his poultry yard to those which he had carried into effect among his flock. The result of the first, in which the preponderance of maturity and vigor were on the side of the female parent (the hen), was 725 males and 1000 females; while in the second, the conditions of which were reversed, the result was 1415 males and 100 females.

A similar law is stated to obtain in regard to insects. If the working bees, in the state of larvæ, receive abundant nourishment and afterward become pregnant, they produce males and females indifferently; but when their growth is impeded, they continue small, and bring forth only males.

Lastly, M. Girou endeavored to ascertain whether anything analogous to the operation of a similar principle was to be found in vegetables. After various abortive attempts, he at length succeeded in submitting to a fair trial twenty-five *pieds* of hemp, among which the proportion of males to females was found to be as follows:—In the products derived from the slender plants, 692 : 1000; in those obtained from strong plants, 907 : 1000.

Having thus gone through with those orders of organized beings which he was able to submit to direct experiment, M. Girou turned his attention to obtaining, from authentic documents, evidence of the state of the fact in regard to the human race. Having ascertained that the mean proportion of males to females, throughout the kingdom of France, was 937 : 1000 in the married state, and 955 : 1000 in the unmarried, he comprehended all the departments in the four following classes:—

1. Those in which the number of female births is above the mean, both in and out of wedlock. This state of things was furnished by those provinces which contain large cities, and which are particularly opulent.

2. Those in which the female sex is equal or superior to the mean in the lawful births, and less in the illegitimate. This was the case in those districts where manufactures or pasturage took the place of husbandry. The first fact is attributed, by M. Girou, to the debilitating effect of manufactures upon the constitution, which, among married persons, falls principally upon males. With regard to the second, it is to be observed, that many of the towns in these departments are maritime, and many others garrisoned; so that a large proportion of this illegal progeny may fairly be attributed to

sailors and soldiers. This idea is confirmed by the returns of a particular province, in which, while garrisoned by troops, which it continued to be for some time, the proportion of females to males, born "hors mariage," was 733 : 1000; but, after these were withdrawn, while the whole number of illegitimate births was reduced by one third, the proportion of females furnished by them was 928 : 1000.

The third class includes those departments in which the female sex is equal or inferior in the lawful births, and superior in the unlawful. This class is constituted mainly by those districts which present the two extremes of fertility and barrenness. The author finds no difficulty in reconciling this fact to his favorite theory. In the infertile districts, he supposes the robust part of the population to be continually emigrating; and the weaker portion, who remain, to exert only a secondary influence on their offspring. In the rich provinces, on the contrary, the robust, among the males, carry all the advantage of their vigorous constitution into the married state; while the feeble, unable to undertake the charge of a family, form irregular connections, and have, for the most part, a female progeny.

The fourth class—that in which the male sex predominates in both kinds of births—is furnished principally by the mountainous departments, by those of the frontiers, and by those which contain a large number of small freeholders. The first and last of these circumstances is known to be favorable to the development of physical force and of mental activity. The frontier towns, as has been mentioned, are, for the most part, garrisoned; and hence their population may be considered as under *military influence.*

We have thus far followed M. Girou in his argument, reserving such observations as occurred to ourselves on the subject until this was concluded. As respects the inferior animals, the facts adduced by him, though not conclusive in favor of his hypothesis, certainly render it very plausible, and highly worthy of the attention of persons elsewhere engaged in similar occupations, to whom it may prove both instructive and profitable to pursue the investigation. Of its applicability to the human race, however, we are more doubtful. We are by no means confident that the production of the respective sexes is governed by any purely physical law; and if there be any such, we think it still remains to be discovered. According to M. Girou's view, it would happen, were any country to be drained of its vigorous male population for the maintenance of a war on its frontiers or abroad, that the population produced by those who remained would be almost exclusively female. Such a consequence is not only at variance with that moral government which we find to be everywhere meeting physical evils with their appropriate remedy, but we believe that it is also contrary to the fact; since various periods in modern history have occurred, when, if real, it could not fail to have been remarked.—Farther, M. Girou himself confesses that historical records are not in his favor. Most of the personages whose talents, bravery, and energy of character, have gained them a place in these annals, are known to have had more daughters than sons;—among these may be found the names of Peter the Great, of Charlemagne, and of Cromwell. On the other hand, a majority of males is known to have resulted, in many instances, from the union of remarkable women with men of a peculiarly mild and peaceful disposition. We cannot, however, wonder that M. Girou should have sought eagerly to explain away these difficulties. Nothing is easier than to substitute analogy for stronger grounds of argument, and scarce any influence more difficult to resist than that of a new and favorite hypothesis.

Note.—In examining the article on this subject in our last paper, we find two important errors of the press, which were allowed to escape us, and which we must request our readers to correct for themselves. The first occurs p. 149, col. 1, l. 2, where, for *male*, read *female;* the second on same page, col. 2, l. 35 and 36, where, for 13 *males and* 2 *females*, read 13 *females and* 2 *males.*

PEIXOTTO'S GREGORY.

An edition of that well known and very excellent work, Gregory's Elements of the Theory and Practice of Physic, has been recently issued from the New York press. It is from the third London edition, and published under the direction of the able Editor of the N. Y. Medical and Physical Journal, who has enriched the work with copious notes that render it more complete as a system of medicine, and particularly valuable to the American student. In addition to all this, the volume contains, in about fifty pages, the celebrated propositions in medicine of M. Broussais, whose opinions and mode—for we cannot say modes—of practice have received a large share of attention from our transatlantic brethren. It is obviously impossible to give, in a single article, any definite idea of the 468 distinct propositions of this great gastro-enteritic champion; but no one who pretends to any share of medical literature should be ignorant of them,—and we are happy, therefore, to find them placed, by Dr. Peixotto, where they will probably find their way to a large proportion of the American Faculty.

LEGAL RECOVERY OF FEES.

It is probably well known to most of our readers, that there is in England a class of persons who are in the habit of waiting on the sick at their houses, and dealing out such medicines as in their judgment the nature of the case may require. These "general practitioners," as they are called, thus exercise the functions of both Apothecary and Physician, and have been in the habit of requiring no other compensation for their services than the profits they might make on the medicines prescribed.

Mr. James Handey, a respectable gentleman of this class, after having attended the family of a Mr. Henson, an attorney of London, made the charge of 1*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.* for medicine, and 5*l.* 5*s.* for *attendance* (being at the rate of 7*s.* 6*d.* a visit), and sent in his bill. The attorney refusing to pay the charge for *attendance*, Mr. Handey brought an action for its recovery, which was confidently defended by the attorney. After the defence was concluded, the Lord Chief Justice, in his address to the jury, observed, "There does not seem to be much dispute as to the charge for the medicines, but for the visits, and of these, it is said, there is no proof; but I cannot see how a medical man is to prove these attendances. It may be said that when he makes them, he has his servant behind his carriage or with him, but what can that servant prove? The opposing counsel says that the persons in the house of the patient might have been called to prove the attendances; but how are they to be got at, or how are their names to be obtained? I cannot see, if a medical gentleman pursues the same honorable plan which this gentleman has done, *of not sending in large and useless quantities of medicine*, how he is to be remunerated, but by being paid for his attendances."

The jury, after a minute's consideration, returned a verdict for the plaintiff, to the full amount of his bill, and the costs of court,—thus authorising a general practitioner to charge for his *attendance* as well as medicine, and showing it unnecessary for him to offer any other proof of his visits, than his own books in which those visits are charged.

The result of this suit has produced a great excitement among the English Faculty. It is hailed as a new era for the profession,—as elevating it to a much higher rank than it could ever have attained under the ancient usage. Mr. Handey, who has had the magnanimity and courage thus to step over the bounds of long-established custom, and the good fortune to obtain a judicial sanction to this proceeding, is lauded by his brethren in terms of no measured commendation, and votes of thanks and dinners of triumph are flowing in upon him from his brethren, with almost unexampled rapidity. We do not learn that any such rewards of his magnanimity were offered at the time the suit was commenced, or during its progress; and had he failed of success, few, we fear, would have offered even to share with him the costs of court, though the virtue of his deed would have been the same as now.

With respect to the policy or even propriety of evincing such marks of triumph, there is much to sustain our doubts; it would surely have comported better with the dignity of the profession to have received this decision with a more quiet joy,—to have exhibited publicly a less degree of exhilaration, than has been actually displayed. In commenting on the proceedings referred to, the Editor of the Medical Gazette very sagely remarks—"To make this an occasion of public triumph, and to get up a dinner at the Freemason's Tavern to celebrate it, can serve no purpose except that of putting money into Mr. Cuff's pocket, and keeping it out of the pockets of those who go there; for John Bull, who already views the decision as an advantage gained over him by the general practitioner, will be induced, by all this appearance of exultation, to think twice before he either swallows his physic or takes his advice."

SUCCESSIVE ABOLITION OF THE SENSES.

The surprising extent to which, when any one of the senses is lost, those which remain are improved and rendered more acute, has been often remarked; but we know not that we have seen this principle of our constitution more strikingly manifested, than in a case reported in one of the French journals. A gentleman, whose habits in youth had been somewhat dissipated, but who, at the period referred to, was in middle life, and the father of a family, was attacked with amaurosis, which, notwithstanding the employment of numerous remedies, continued increasing till he became entirely blind. He was at this time engaged in the duties of an office which obliged him to receive and attend to a considerable correspondence. This office he retained, notwithstanding his loss of sight; he continued to receive communications as usual, and after he was made acquainted with their contents, he had them filed, and so placed with reference to the subject-matter, and the dates, that he was able to recur afterward, unassisted, to any one which it was necessary to examine. In the mean time, his sense of touch acquired so great delicacy, that he was able to recognise the volumes of which his library consisted, and to determine, by passing his finger over the engravings, whether they were of wood or of copper, and if the latter, the particular variety. Some years after this, his hearing began to fail, and at length he became totally deaf. Deprived, in this manner, of two senses, he still continued to keep up an intercourse with those who surrounded him. Letters were cut out in relief, of which those who wished to speak to him formed sentences, which he read by means of touch. His memory remained remarkably good, and he would often talk with great animation to those who visited him. In this state he remained a considerable time; after which, symptoms of paralysis began to manifest themselves. These progressively increased till he lost all sensibility and all power of voluntary motion. The only traces of muscular power which remained, were to be found in his voice, which continued articulate and distinct, and in his deglutition, which was unimpaired. By mere accident, it was also discovered that the sensibility of one cheek still remained. This suggested to him the ingenious expedient of having the letters of the sentence which was addressed to him traced with the finger upon his face. When a word was completed, he would pronounce it, to ascertain that he understood it rightly. After the first attempts of this sort, he acquired extraordinary quickness in comprehending what was intended, so that it was only necessary to trace a few words, before he understood and answered the whole. One of his sons had the perseverance to communicate to him a long political document, in which he was interested, wholly in this mode. He was not destined, however, long to survive the dissolution of so many of the ties which bound him to society: his spirits became depressed and his temper irascible, and he soon fell a victim to these complicated sufferings.

SARSAPARILLA.

We mentioned, in a former number, some remarks on this article by Dr. Hancock, of Demerara, which went to show that much of the disappointment which has been experienced in regard to its effects, has arisen from the employment of some inert specimen, or from an erroneous mode of preparing it. When these circumstances are attended to, it is found an active and valuable remedy. The following is given as an improved mode of preparing the jeirave, or diet drink, which derives its principal efficacy from this root.

R. Rio Negro Sarsa bruised, lb. ij.
Pulv. cort. guaici, ℥ viij.
Ligni guiac. rasi,
Sem. anis.,
Rad. glycyrrh. āā ℥ iv.
Cort. rad. mezereon, ℥ ij.
Treacle, lb. ij.
Caryophyl contus no. xij. M.

Pour upon these ingredients four gallons of boiling water, and shake the vessel thrice a day. When a fermentation has well begun, it is fit for use, and may be taken in the dose of a small tumblerful twice or thrice a day. In cases of old and obstinate complaints, such as leprous affections, elephantiasis, various anomalous ulcerations and foul disorders of the skin, the following articles were added to the mixture:—

R. Ant. tart. gr. xij.
Oxym. hyd. gr. viij—x.
Ammon. mur. ʒ i. M.

These three articles, being dissolved in a little water, are to be thrown into the jug when the infusion has begun to ferment, and not before, as they would prevent the fermentation taking place. The addition of these active ingredients not only greatly enhances the alterative power of the vegetable infusion, but at the same time so effectually prevents its decomposition, that it will remain for a long time unaltered, even in hot climates.

PROGRESS OF PHRENOLOGY.

It is amusing to trace back the gradual progress made by new discoveries in science towards general adoption. In the year 1815, the first English exposition of Phrenology was published by Dr. Spurzheim, and universally ridiculed both by the multitude and by men of scientific repute—the medical profession, perhaps, exceeding all others in their decided hostility to it. In 1820, so many converts to this new science had been made, that a Phrenological Society was established in Edinburgh, which also was the subject of no little hostility, ridicule and abuse. In 1825, London, Calcutta, Washington, and some half-dozen English and Scotch provincial towns, had imitated the example of Edinburgh; and, by this time, with the exception of the third and last attempt at opposition by the Edinburgh Review, men of scientific and literary celebrity had, in general, ceased to write against, though not to sneer at, the discoveries of Gall and Spurzheim. Another period of five years is now nearly completed, and we find, in Great Britain alone, upwards of twenty societies exclusively devoted to phrenological inquiry—a number which, perhaps, no other single and isolated branch of science can boast. Hitherto the medical professors of Edinburgh have been silent or sarcastic on this subject; but in the present year, one of our medical lecturers (Dr. Mackintosh), who deservedly ranks among the first of his profession here, has, in his course of lectures for the present college session, not only declared his conviction of the correctness of the phrenological system, but has requested Mr. Coombe, of phrenological celebrity, to lecture in his stead during three days, in order to show to his class the important advantages afforded by Phrenology to the science of medicine; assuring the members of his class, that what he had scarcely arrived at, after many years of practice, in different climates, joined with reading, Phrenology could give them in a few months study of it; and so clear and so certain were its principles, that, if he had the misfortune to be afflicted with insanity or any other of the numerous diseases of the brain, he would rather trust himself to the care of Mr. Coombe, though not a member of the medical profession, than to the first physicians of Edinburgh, if ignorant of Phrenology. In this, Dr. Mackintosh is by no means singular; for, among the juniors of his profession, the study of this science is beginning to be sedulously cultivated, on account of its extreme importance in diseases of the brain and nerves; and even the older practitioners, to whom new discoveries and opinions are generally unpalatable, have almost ceased to oppose Phrenology openly. In the short period of fifteen years since its first introduction to the British metropolis, this science has gained over to it hundreds, or rather thousands of supporters, notwithstanding that it was then opposed and ridiculed by several of the first men in literature and science; and so confident are its advocates both of its utility and its rapidly increasing progress, that many of them anticipate another period of fifteen years rendering the appellations of *anti-phrenologist* and *old woman* synonymous and equally convertible terms for expressing folly and contempt.—*Edinburgh paper.*

Poisoning from the Domestic Spider.—Dr. Weber, of Bouxvillers, gives the following account of this occurrence. A lady, who suffered from toothach, was in the habit of using, as a remedy, a kind of plaster, made of equal parts of the crowned spider (arenea diadema) and treacle, which she placed in the hand opposite to the side on which she had pain. On one occasion, this lady having an attack of toothach, sent for some spiders, as usual; but instead of these the domestic spider (araneca domestica) was brought. They were applied in the customary manner, and allowed to remain some hours beyond the wonted period (ten to twelve hours), when the hand, fore-arm, and lower half of the arm became swollen and extremely painful, of dark yellowish color, and covered with a multitude of vesicles, accompanied by fever and anxiety. These symptoms continued for six weeks, and were at last removed by calomel pushed till it produced salivation.—*La Clinique.*

WEEKLY REPORT OF DEATHS IN BOSTON, ENDING APRIL 2.

Date.	Sex.	Age.	Disease.
March 26.	F.	2 1-2 y	worms
	F.	4	dropsy on the head
	F.	45	unknown
27.	M.	56	palsy
28.	M.	30	fever
	F.	18 mo	dropsy on the brain
	M.	19 yrs	bilious fever
	M.	20 mo	dropsy on the brain
29.	M.	4	convulsions
	M.	24 yrs	consumption
	M.	30	convulsions
30.	M	15 mo	unknown
	F.	43 yrs	canker in the throat
	F.	10 mo	lung fever
April 1.	M.	59 yrs	fever
	F.	52	dropsy
2.	M.	81	old age
	M.	47	consumption

Males, 11,—Females, 7. Total, 18.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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April 6.

MEMORIA MEDICA.

THIS day published by CARTER & HENDEE, corner of Washington and School Streets, Memoria Medica,—a Medical Common-place Book,—with an alphabetical Index of the most common terms occurring in practice. Carefully selected and arranged by a Fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society.

From Dr. James Jackson, Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine in Harvard University.

Gentlemen,—I have examined the "Memoria Medica" which you sent to me. I think the plan of it very excellent, and that it will be found highly useful to practitioners and students of medicine. I have never believed that a voluminous common-place book can be very beneficial to any man, unless he means to become an author. But on the other hand, every one will find an advantage in keeping a common-place book in which he may notice the detached facts which come under his notice, and which are likely soon to be lost from his memory. The book you have prepared will be found well adapted for this purpose by medical men, and will be more likely to be used by those who procure it than a common blank book, because all the labor of arrangement is saved.

I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant,
JAMES JACKSON.

From Dr. Walter Channing, Professor of Obstetrics and Medical Jurisprudence in Harvard University.

I have examined the Medical Common-place Book which was left with your note this evening, and with pleasure offer you my thanks for the publication of so useful a volume. Every practitioner of medicine will agree with the remarks in the preface on the inconveniences and absolute loss of what is very useful, which result from depending solely on the memory. Not unfrequently it happens that some particular prescription is peculiarly suited to an individual. Some time passes, and an occasion again arises in which we believe that the same medicine might be equally beneficial; what it was, however, has wholly escaped us; and though something else may be equally useful, still some regret may be felt, at least by the patient, that what has been found beneficial cannot again be at once resorted to. Some object to an artificial method of preserving, for such and other uses, what may be safely trusted to the memory, if that faculty be faithfully cultivated. I am willing to admit that there is force in this objection; but it is a simple question of fact only we have to consider. If it be true that there is much lost to the individual, and certainly much more to the profession, by trusting entirely to the memory, the occasional use of the Common-place Book for the preservation of what is truly valuable, has all the recommendation it needs. For such purposes, viz., for the registering of cases the most rare, and the frequent, if important, epidemics, prescriptions, &c., your *Memoria Medica* promises to be very useful; and for these it well deserves to be recommended to physicians. Students attending hospital practice will find it very valuable. Its tables of names are very full, and under references very easy. I cannot but hope it will get into general use.

Yours, &c., W. CHANNING.

Dec. 8.

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Jan 26.

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